The Australian National University
Institute of the Arts

Canberra School of Art

GRADUATE DIPLOMA OF ART

Monica Mitchell

Margel Hinder and the Reception of Modern Sculpture

Research Paper
20%

PRESENTED IN PART FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE GRADUATE DIPLOMA OF ART
1995

ABSTRACT

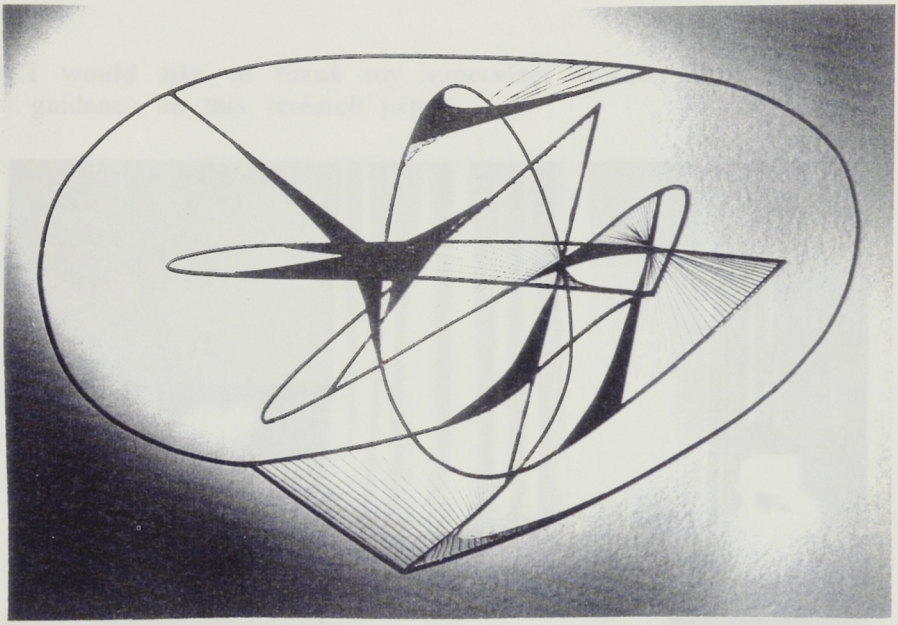


Fig.1 MARGEL HINDER. *Revolving Construction* 1957.

Discovery: Research into integrating nature and the figure in ceramic sculpture. The studio work explores personal narration in clay rock forms and imagery derived from the Australian bush. The research paper investigates elements of modern art's reception in America in the early 1900s and in Australia from 1934 to 1994 focusing on Margel Hinder and the reception of modern sculpture. A study taking the form of an exhibition of ceramic sculptures exhibited at the Canberra School of Art Gallery from March 16-25, 1995 which comprises the outcome of the studio practice component (80%) together with a research paper (20%) and a report which documents the nature of the course of study undertaken.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Gordon Bull for his guidance on this research paper.

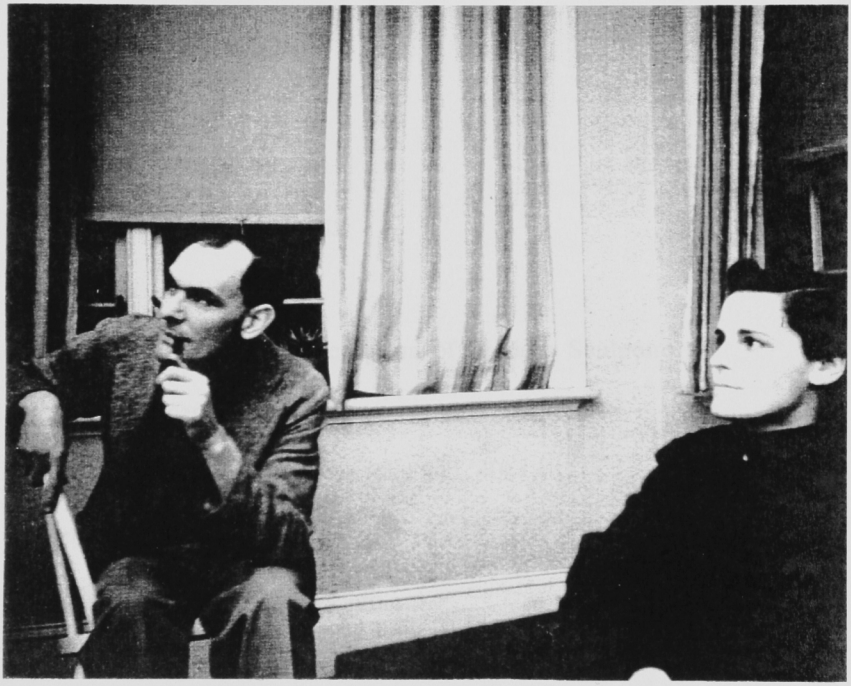


Fig.2 Frank and Margel Hinder

Special thanks to Margel Hinder for allowing my to visit and interview her in August. Thanks also for her help in reviewing and proofreading my seminar paper and for giving me permission to use her soundrecordings in my research.

Thanks to Ingo Kleinert and Nigel Lendon for coordinating the PG1 program.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig.1, p.2. MARGEL HINDER, *Revolving Construction,* 1959, wire and plastic, suspended mobile, 35.6x55.9x49.5cm. Image from Graeme Sturgeon's The Development of Australian Sculpture, p.155.

Fig.2, p.3. Photograph of Frank and Margel Hinder in Richard Haese's Rebels and Precursors, p.70

Fig.3, p.6. Photograph of Margel Hinder working on *Western Assurance Company Sculpture* in Age, August 25, 1962, p.18.

Fig.4, p.9. *The Armory Show 1913,* photograph, Armory Show Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. in William Homes' Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-garde, p.166.

Fig.5, p.13. MARGEL HINDER, *Mother and Child,* 1939, ironbark, 125.5x38.0x38.0cm, in R. Free's Frank and Margel Hinder 1930-1980, p.64.

Fig.6, p.16. Hieroglyph in Jay Hambidge's Dynamic Symmetry, p.26.

Fig.7,p.16. Amphora in the Boston Museum, Dynamic Symmetry,p.129.

Fig.8, p.17. MARGEL HINDER, *Suspended Dots,* 1953, steel wire, 38.0x38.0x20.0cm in Frank and Margel Hinder 1930-1980, p.68.

Fig.9, p.20. MARCEL DUCHAMP's *Fountain,* readymade, 1917 (lost), original 1917 photograph by Alfred Stieglitz, silver gelatin print, 9 5/16"x7" in The Definitively Unfinished Marcel Duchamp, p.134.

Fig.10,p.20. SIDNEY NOLAN, *Boy and the Moon,* 1939 in Haese, p.151.

Fig.11,p.21. MARGEL HINDER *Untitled Bronze 3/4,* 1979, 32.0x35.0x12.0cm, cast bronze, from Bloomfield Gallery's invitation.

Fig.12,p.22. MARGEL HINDER, *Thistledown,* 1957, monel metal and solder, 50.8x66.1x66.1cm in Frank and Margel Hinder 1930-1980, p.69.

Fig.13,p.24. MARGEL HINDER, *Western Assurance Company Sculpture,* Sydney, 1959, copper and solder in Arch. in Australia, Dec. 1960, p.95.

Fig.14,p.26. MARGEL HINDER, *Sculpture for Woden Town Square,* Canberra, 1972, aluminum, 36'x18'x12', photo by M. Mitchell 1994. Fabricated by Michael Snook at Rigby Jones, Fairfield, N.S.W.

Fig.15,p.27. MARGEL HINDER, *Captain James Cook Memorial Fountain,* 1961/66, Civic Park, Newcastle, textured copper over steel structures. Wall made of specially quarried porphyry. Assisted by Kevin Goodrich of Dietsch Tattershall and Co. Ltd., by engineers and Frank Hinder in The Development of Australian Sculpture, p.183.

Fig.16.p,30. MARGEL HINDER, *Free-standing Sculpture* for the Reserve Bank of Australia, Sydney, 25'x15', 1964, copper-coated metal over stainless steel structure in "The Thing has Sydney Puzzled", Daily Telegraph, Oct. 28, 1964.

INTRODUCTION

Fig.3

I began with an interest in the idea of a woman artist traveling to another country and being influenced artistically by the new culture. A large list of Australian women traveling overseas and American women traveling to Australia and overseas from the 1800s to the present was narrowed with the help of my supervisor Gordon Bull to one artist, the sculptor Margel Hinder. The result--a correspondence by letter and a later interview in August 1994 with Ms. Hinder. Information from about twenty hours of taped interviews was the primary resource in creating this paper which contrasts the reception of American modernism in the early 1900s and modern art's reception in Australia from 1934 to 1994. My focus is on the negative reception of Margel Hinder's sculptures and its effect on the artist.

Margel Hinder and the Reception of Modern Sculpture

Modernism in art is "...gangrened stuff (which) attracts the human blowflies of the world who thrive on putrid fare."[1] This 1940s opinion of J.S. MacDonald, director of the National Gallery of Victoria, foreshadows the tumultuous public reception of Margel Hinder's modernist sculpture. The hostility was a result of a fear of new art ideas emanating from Europe and America in the early 1900s; ideas considered by many to be decadent and corrupt. In 1940, Lionel Lindsay, a trustee of the National Gallery of New South Wales, believed that modernism contradicted established art practices and revolted against fundamental art principles and traditions.[2] But were these "modern" ideas new? In 1934, Margel Hinder, along with her husband, Australian futurist and cubist painter Frank Hinder, introduced to Australia's artworld ideas based on a theory of the American mathematician Jay Hambidge elaborated in his 1920 book, Dynamic Symmetry: The Greek Vase. Dynamic symmetry is a reinterpretation of design concepts based on an analysis of Egyptian hieroglyphics and more fully of Greek pottery.[3] The modern ideas of the Hinders did not contradict long-established and trusted ways to create art. These design concepts were built on a knowledge of ancient Egyptian and Greek art practices which found a rebirth in the Hinders' art.

The negative reception of Margel Hinder's sculpture resulted from a fear of the unfamiliar. For Margel Hinder, however, reception did not feed her production. At least with poorly executed representational sculpture, the viewer is able to relate to or find some merit in what can be immediately recognized. In the contemporary age, many people do not feel obliged to spend time or energy in understanding or questioning creative endeavors. Margel Hinder's mammoth sculptures force the viewer to be aware of their presence. For Ms. Hinder, it is important to capture one's attention and take notice of the sculptures she knows are important.

Although the majority of her major sculptures experienced instances of negative reception and still do today, Margel Hinder believes modern art is worth fighting for and continuing to produce and experiment. She did not strive for public approval, but she was confident in the relevance and quality of her sculptures and demanded that they be seen by many. Her major works are imposing large structures and are not easily destroyed although some vandals have tried. The sculptures are altered by time through vandalism, graffiti,

urban development and progress, however, Margel Hinder strove to insure their existence in a metallic longevity.

In order to appreciate a Margel Hinder sculpture, a knowledge of the concepts behind the abstract constructions is important. Firstly, it is necessary to decribe the American and Australian artworlds of which she was a product and then the theory of dynamic symmetry--one of many philosophies she studied. Finally, Ms. Hinder's accounts of negative reception will be presented.

For the many who wanted to prevent modernism from spreading in the early 1900s in America and the mid-1900s in Australia, tactics included criticism, exclusion from major art societies, galleries, and less art purchases. The Hinders experienced all of these. For Margel Hinder, sculpture is not profitable but is worthy of a life's devotion. Putting Margel Hinder and her art in an historical context, I have chosen to describe the American artworld and modernism from 1906--the year the Hinders were born--to 1934--the year the Hinders moved to Australia. Modernism's reception in America during this time will be described--specifically investigating the conflicts between the democratic Independent Society of Artists (including Robert Henri and The Eight) versus Alfred Stieglitz and the 291 Gallery. I will then describe Margel Hinder's Australian experience and elements of the reception of modernism in Australia from 1934 onwards. I will compare some experiences in the Contemporary Art Society in Sydney with the modern art reception conflict of the Independent's Show and 291 Gallery. Comparisons between the modern art societies in Australia and America provide the settings in which Margel and Frank Hinder worked. These environments shaped the Hinders' art just as the environments in which their artworks are exhibited mold the way in which their art is received by the viewer.

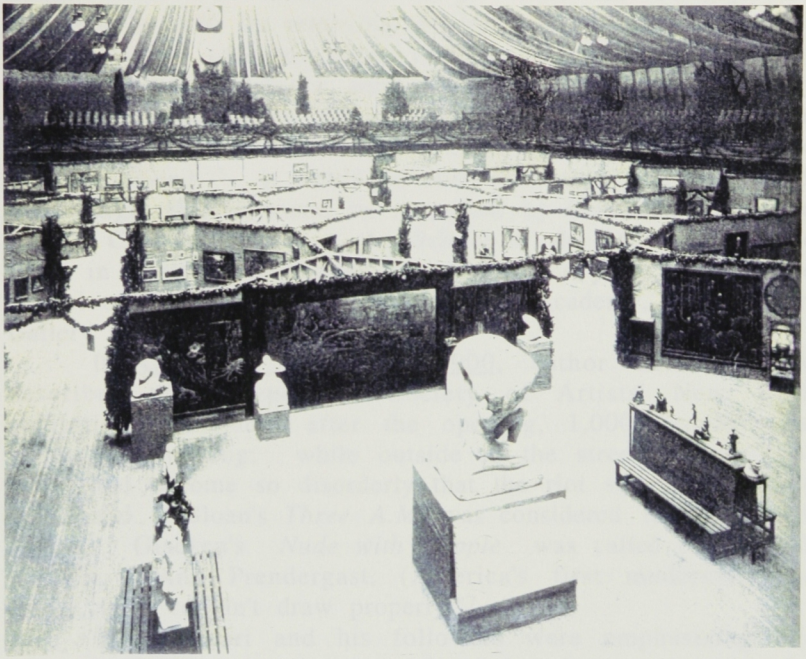


Fig.4. *The Armory Show, 1913.*

Born in 1906, in Brooklyn, New York, Margel Ina Harris was educated in art by some supporters of modern ideas. In 1929, she met her future husband Frank Hinder and together they joined the contemporary art movement. In 1927, at the age of 21, Frank Hinder had left Australia for the Art Institute of Chicago and later went to New York with the purpose of learning modern art techniques and philosophies. In the early 1900s, the American artworld was not open to the new ideas modern art offered. 1910 was an important year in American modern art when the Independent Society of artists, including the Eight with Robert Henri, held their first show. Concerned with democracy in art, all work was hung in alphabetical order. The Eight (formerly called The Ash Can School) who organised the Independent's exhibition were, "...the first American artists to aim programmatically at founding a native style consonant with the American experience...Carried out for the sake of democracy in art rather than in the name of 'art for art's sake', the Ash Can School's revolt was determined not by the strength of the American academic tradition but by its weakness."[4]

A member of The Eight, Robert Henri admired Thomas Eakins who was forced to resign from the Pennsylvania Academy in 1886 for removing the loin cloth from a nude male model. After spending three years in Paris, in 1891, Henri returned to Philadelphia and his instructor Charles Grafley introduced him to two young newspaper illustrators: William Glackens and John Sloan who became "Henri's disciple and lifelong friend."[5] It would be thirty-five years later in 1926-9 that Margel Hinder would be instructed by Frederick Allan and Henri's Charles Grafley at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston--after having studied for one year, 1925, at the School of Fine arts of Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, Albright Art Gallery under Florence Bach.[6]

In American Art since 1900, author Barbara Rose describes the Independent Society of Artists' New York exhibition. "An hour after the opening, 1,000 people were inside the building; while outside in the street, a crowd of 1,500 had become so disorderly that the riot squad had to be summoned... Sloan's *Three A.M.* was considered 'too frank and vulgar'; Glacken's *Nude with Apple* was called coarse and wooden. And Prendergast, (America's first modernist) the critics said, couldn't draw properly."[7]

While Henri and his followers were emphasizing life over art in a democratic approach to American modernism, the photographer Alfred Stieglitz took an opposite path with the concept 'art for art's sake'. At his 291 gallery, Stieglitz presented the first American exhibitions of August Rodin, Matisse, Toulous-Lautrec, Rousseau, Picabia and Severini and the first exhibition of children's art and Negro sculpture. In April 1911, 291 exhibited works by Picasso showing his complete evolution through Cubism. It was here in 1914, that Brancusi had his first one-man show.[8] In Boston several years later, Margel Hinder saw for the first time Brancusi's polished brass *Bird in Flight*; in a 1994 interview she enthusiastically recalled that "It really took off!"[9]

Like the rivalry in the '40s evident in the Contemporary Art Society in Sydney, the rivalry between the two leaders of the main art factions in America in the early 1900s is clear. In April 1910, when the Society of Independent Artists held their first exhibition, Stieglitz presented his first group show of American modernists at 291...a review in Camera Work castigated the Independents, warning them, "You'll never beat the Academy at its own stupid game by substituting quantity for quality."[10] It is this idea of 'art for art's sake'--stressing 'quality' versus a democratic approach to art that appears in

the Australian debate between the CAS's secretary Peter Bellew and the Hinders.

"To the Stieglitz group, Henri and his friends were conventional if not retarded. Henri, on the other hand, found Stieglitz' 'ultramodernism' faddish, and since it was unintelligible to the majority, undemocratic... 'Life' might appeal to the masses, but 'art' ...was for the sensitive, the enlightened, the committed--'the happy few'. And it was to the happy few that Stieglitz addressed himself."[11]

Barbara Rose makes the distinction between Stieglitz and Henri. A distinction which reflects a conflict of opinion over "what is modern art?"

> Both factions played necessary roles. Henri's democratic, nationalistic stance was necessary to give American art a broad enough base from which to work, to the same degree that Stieglitz' insistence on quality was needed in order to set a standard. Both encouraged artists to break with the Academy and to work independently; both were uncompromising in their disregard for fashion and public approval and in their encouragement of young artists. And both were artists themselves, as well as educators. However, Stieglitz was an artist of the first rank, an innovator (who changed the history of photography) which Henri was not.[12]

Considered the most important event in the history of American modernism, the Armory Show (the International Exhibition of Modern Art) held in the former armory of New York's Sixty-ninth Regiment in 1913, had an estimated 1,600 pieces of European and American painting, sculpture, and graphics on exhibit.[13] The Armory Show exhibited, without discriminating, a variety of the most advanced experimental European and American art.[14]

In 1917, 291 Gallery had to close its doors. In this same year, the Society of American Artists revealed an important inconsistency with their democratic ideas. This involved a second large 'egalitarian' exhibition which unknowingly refused the inclusion of its vice president Marcel Duchamp's controversial ready-made *Fountain* --a urinal signed 'R. Mutt' (see **Fig.9, p.20**) Barbara Rose describes the circumstances:

> Although the show was presumably open to all who paid the $5 registration fee, *Fountain* by R. Mutt was rejected. In protest, Duchamp resigned

> from the Society the night before the exhibition opened. Thus the decade of the Armory Show drew to a close: Duchamp the representative of Europe's avant-garde, challenged the premise of democracy in art, as he would continue for more than a half-century to challenge art's most sacred tenets. For the moment, democracy could not be extended to tolerate extremism. It was safe to say that until it did, modernism would remain an artificial flower, rootless in American soil.[15]

The impact of the war left America isolated from Europe and American modern artists felt this information void. "The Twenties were not an altogether happy epoch for American art. During the disillusioning postwar period many artists felt that their only choices were to give up abstraction, give up art, give up society, or give up life. In many ways this mood coincided with the conservative European retreat from abstraction and experimentation; that is, with the time when many progressive European artists returned to tighter, more realistic styles."[16]

In 1929, Margel Harris attended summer school in painting at Moriah on Lake Champlain. Here she met Frank Hinder and in 1930 secretly married him. From 1930-1934, Margel Hinder attended classes at Child Walker School of Fine Art in Boston under Howard Giles and her husband Frank. In 1932, the Hinders went to Taos, New Mexico--an area where Georgia O'Keeffe, Stieglitz' wife, was working at the time--drawing inspiration from the landscape. "With the coming of the Depression what little serious interest there had been in art would soon be distracted by the more pressing issue of the country's economic collapse."[17] The Depression--poverty, joblessness, and coming war with Europe-- smothered Margel and Frank Hinder. Finally, the Hinders with their two year old daughter Enid decided to find better hopes in Australia. In 1934, they sailed to Sydney and were never to return to the United States.

Fig.5. *Mother and Child,* 1939.

Modernism came early in the U.S. In Australia, in the 1930s, modernism was just beginning. Ms. Hinder mentioned some of her earliest experiences of Australia in the 1994 interview: "When I first came, I was so utterly horrified by the differences between Boston and Sydney. I thought it (Sydney) was a very clean city. I thought it was very beautiful. But we used to go to dances,..up near the University...we were very young in those days and a ...I'll never forget dancing with a man who had a very English accent...and he wanted to know where I came from and I said I came from Boston. He said,'Oh, no culture there at all!'"[18]

When mentioning reception of her artwork in Australia, I asked Ms. Hinder if it would have been different artistically if she'd never left the U.S.--does she feel that her art would have been received better publicly? She responded, "I couldn't say. Oh, modern art came to America so early. You know the Armory Show? Remember that in 1912 or 15 and that's when all of Frank's teachers first saw contemporary art. They saw Picasso and Matisse and all that you know. It came so early there and we were so influenced by that."[19]

In Balson, Crowley, Fizelle,Hinder, Renee Free, in acknowledging the influence these artists had on Australian art, states that the influence "...was not great if one thinks of the number of the followers of their styles. They opened the eyes of this isolated continent to developments overseas. Their real contribution, however, has been in fighting all over again, in this country, the battle of modern art, expanding the very concept of what art is." [20]

In Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years of Australian Art, Richard Haese summarizes that art during this period and more specifically,

> ...the paintings...testify to the fact that something quite extraordinary was taking place in Australian art. It was something that can not be explained solely in terms of overseas influences. In part a response to external stimuli, it represented at its best an Australian modernism as distinctive as anything comparable in Britain or America during the war years. Based on a new intellectual and aesthetic awareness on the part of artists and their associates, it was a product of many factors that related to the ending of Australian social, economic and cultural parochialism: the shock of depression, the trauma of war, the return of Australian students from abroad, the arrival of immigrants and of refugees from fascism and greater ease of communication during the 1930s. Paradoxically, it was fueled also by the enforced isolation resulting from the spread of the war after 1941.[21]

For many, however, the spread of modernism was feared in Australia. An example of this negative reception is revealed by Lionel Lindsay in 1940. He agreed that modernism in art equates decadence in art: "Modernism in art is a freak, not a natural evolutional growth. Its causes lie in the spirit of the age that separates this century from all others: the age of speed, sensationalism, jazz and the insensate adoration of money."[22] He goes on to add that, "[art destroys when] it revolts against all those traditions and forms images in art by which the human mind has been built, as it has done for the last twenty years under the label modern art. But that is only one facet that is at present turning Europe into a jungle. Europe invented modernism in art and now Europe must pay the penalty for its relapse into primitivism and moral imbecility."[23] In 1937, the first public battle for contemporary

art in Australia commenced with Dr. Herbert Vere Evatt, a long-time friend of the Hinders and prominent labor politician; Ms. Hinder became an Australian citizen so she could vote for him.[24] Evatt defended contemporary art versus J.S. MacDonald and the then Attorney-General, Robert Gordon Menzies. In 1937, in his speech at the opening of the Victorian Artists' Society's annual exhibition, Menzies announced that "Great art speaks a language which every intelligent person can understand, the people who call themselves modernists today talk a different language."[25] Margel Hinder recalled that according to Menzies, "It was unAustralian to be a modern artist."[26]

This is the mood of the Australian artworld that Margel and Frank Hinder plunged into in 1934. Their experiences in America--an introduction to modern art and especially Jay Hambidge's theory of Dynamic Symmetry gave them a strong seedling to plant into Australian soil. But their battles were just beginning. Ms. Hinder mentioned in a 1993 interview that when she lectured on modern art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales she used to upset the guards so much because she used to bring up her selections of modern art from the basement storage. "The guards were distressed by the modernness of the paintings."[27] Ms. Hinder recalled that being a contemporary artist at the time was shocking. She emphasized that "Things meant so much in those days. Today Frank says that there is nothing to fight for."[28] Drusilla Modjeska asked why there were so many fights within the Contemporary Art Society? Margel quickly retorted, "Because people like fighting and everyone has their own ideas and they don't like other peoples' ideas."[29] If Lindsay contended that modernism was a revolt against all the '..traditions and forms images in art by which the human mind has been built', then he did not understand the mindset of many of Australia's modern artists.

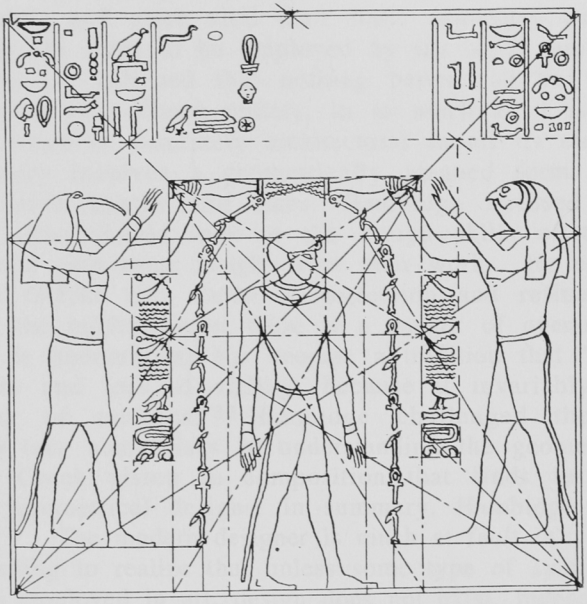


Fig.6.

Concerned that modern design was generally incoherent, Jay Hambidge published in 1920 the book Dynamic Symmetry: The Greek Vase which undertook "...a comparative study of the bases of all design, both in nature and art" to aid the modern artist.[30] Hambidge realized that there were two types of symmetry: a passive one called static that is used frequently in art and an active one he calls dynamic that is more complex and is the type used by Greek potters and evident in Egyptian hieroglyphics. Static symmetry is concerned with a general shape without an intimate look at the way the shape is composed--the repetition of patterns and geometrical construction as found in nature. Hambidge states that dynamic symmetry is found in crystals, flowers, seed pods, shells, and leaf

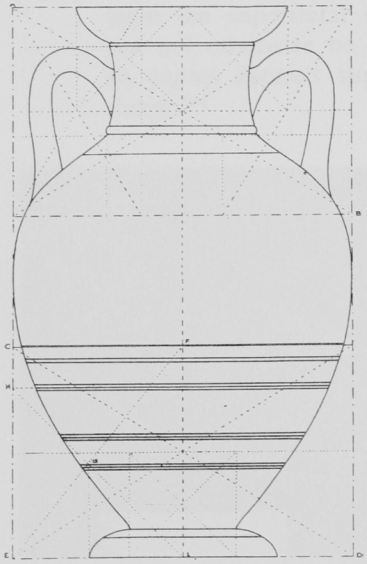


Fig.7.

distribution in plants. According to Hambidge, dynamic symmetry is entirely unrecognized in modern times.[31] "It is more subtle and more vital than static symmetry and is pre-eminently the form to be employed by the artist, architect and craftsman...He believed that nothing better can be found for this purpose than Greek pottery, in as much as it is the only pottery which is absolutely architectural in all its elements."[32] The pottery involves a geometrically planned form composed of repetitive shapes and lines. Hambidge stressed that the modern artist should look to the design skills of the Greek potters and gain some insight from their work. He emphasized that the Greeks had aimed at perfection and refinement and that for the modern artist there is a danger of over-refinement because it (modernism) has become a tradition that "..leads to sweetness and loss of virility, because it invariably ends in overwork of surfaces."[33] Hambidge challenged the modern artist to take some risks in understanding the geometrical and rational Greek vision in composition that finds its proof in nature's geometrical designs. In summary, Hambidge warned,

> The modern designer is much at fault in failing to realize that unless some type of symmetry is employed in art, design does not exist...Indeed, this is the lesson that modern artists must learn; that the backbone of art is formalization and not realism. Art means exactly what the term implies. It is not nature, but it must be based on nature, not upon the superficial skin, but upon structure. Man can not otherwise be creative, be free. As long as he copies nature's superficialities he is an artistic slave. [34]

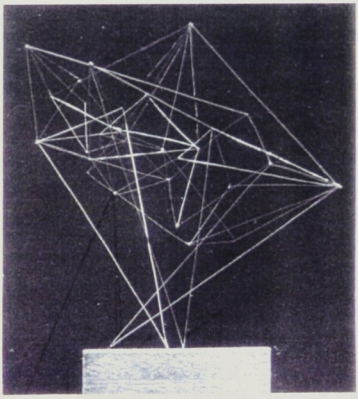


Fig. 8. *Suspended Dots*

Hambidge's book gave clues to modern artists on how to create more effective and rationally designed compositions. In my research, Margel Hinder never mentioned how the Dynamic Symmetry theory could be applied to her work. However, its influence is evident in several of her sculptures. For example, her wire abstracts from 1953 show geometrical contructions. Her *Suspended Dots* has a dynamic complexity of interlocking triangles instead of a static form.

It reminds me of lines connecting stars or the intricate planes in a crystal or snowflake.

This is the mindset of Frank and Margel Hinder. Their strict philosophies of art forced them to look at contemporary art and how it should be created in a critical way. Their study of dynamic symmetry helped create their beliefs of what constitutes legitimate modern art. It was not art and democracy they strove for but, in my opinion, they were like Stieglitz in America, interested in creating 'art for art's sake' which they knew would not be readily accepted or understood by the majority.

During the period when the Hinders were members of the Contemporary Art Society, debates constantly arose concerning art's reception and the politics of art. Like Stieglitz and the 291 group who were against Henri and the Independent's notion of democratic art, an egalitarian view of art, Frank and Margel Hinder got into a heated debate with the secretary of the Contemporary Art Society Mr. Peter Bellew in 1940 over just this issue.

Regarding the CAS Sydney exhibition in September 1940, the critic Kenneth Wilkinson, in his review of the exhibition in Art in Australia, wrote that "Sydney artists were, on the whole, more amiable and reasonable than their Melbourne counterparts. 'They do not', Wilkinson noted, 'publicly fight to the death.' 'Publicly' was the operative word. In private, the dispute over the question of 'standards' was intense, and demonstrated that many Sydney artists felt...that artists had to ensure the right kind of professionalism."[35] Author Richard Haese describes the controversy:

> Sidney Nolan's painting *Boy and the Moon* tested the limits of this sense of professionalism and served to polarize opinion. Wilkinson listed it as being among the minority of works that failed to reach accepted standards. 'Few spectators' he maintained 'will be able to take seriously Sidney Nolan's *Boy and the Moon*. For Wilkinson, it was the work of a non-artist and others agreed. Frank Hinder recalls that he 'was one of several who wanted it thrown out because we saw it as such a fraud.' It appeared to be a gimmick; some called it the 'lavatory seat' and for many it seemed to devalue their own works, alongside which it was hung. Hinder went so far as to resign from the CAS

committee in protest at Peter Bellew's high-handed insistence on its inclusion.[36] (see **Fig.10, p.20.**)

The reception of modern art was tumultuous in both the United States and in Australia. Modern sculpture in Australia had a more difficult public reception than other media. With these conflicting factors, Margel Hinder's determination and loyalty to her art is extraordinary. In Graeme Sturgeon's The Development of Australian Sculpture, Margel Hinder comments on this inter-war period [c.1938], "...painting was the dominant art and there seemed to be little understanding of or desire for the three-dimensional. In exhibitions, sculpture was usually placed to finish off a line of paintings."[37] In A Matter of Taste, Robert Haines, director of David Jones' Art Gallery, recalls a typical incident of sculpture's reception:

> Two women from the NSW Art Gallery Society appeared in the doorway of David Jones' Art Gallery and one said, with criticism and complaint in her voice, "We thought this was an art gallery--where are the paintings?' Not waiting for an answer she turned to her friend and said scathingly, "It's only sculpture!' and walked out. Collectors frequently talk about 'artists and sculptors' when they mean to say 'painters and sculptors'. It is probably a reflection of past inadequacies in public art education. Commercial galleries have reinforced this attitude by devoting only limited attention to sculpture realizing that there was little profit in it in the short term. The public has been left with the impression, drawn from the mass of Victoriana in public places that sculpture is directly related to tombstones and is the work of monumental masons.[38]

By describing certain aspects of the American and Australian artworlds in the early 1900s, the critical context surrounding Margel Hinder's early art career is understood. In the following examples from taped interviews, Margel Hinder describes some later instances of her sculpture's reception.

Fig.9 *Fountain,* Marcel Duchamp's readymade, 1917 (lost), original 1917 photograph by Alfred Stieglitz, silver gelatin print, 9 5/16"x7".

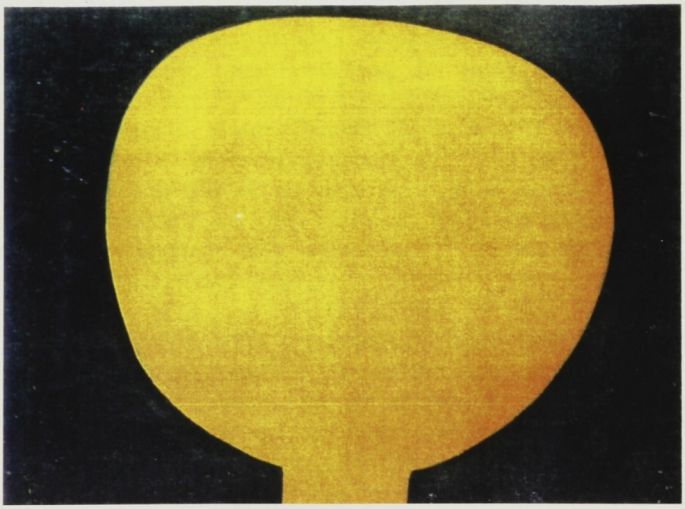


Fig.10. Sidney Nolan, *Boy and the Moon,* 1939.

Fig.11. *Untitled Bronze,* 1979.

On August 19, 1994, I had the opportunity to interview Margel Hinder and to ask her about her career as a sculptor. Her remembrances which most captured my attention were the frustrating experiences involving public reception of her sculptures. Specifically, her sculptures were vandalised, misunderstood, and several designs experienced copyright infringement.

In utilizing examples from Ms. Hinder's career in sculpture, the problems of art's reception will foreshadow what artists, specifically those working in three dimensions, will have to endure.

According to Margel Hinder in the article "She speaks in Sculpture" from 1949 in Woman's Day: "To most people, art is a pretty picture--a picture of gum trees or a nude. Most of our taste is conditioned on our walls at home as children. Some never revolt against that authority."[39] In the Woman's Day article Ms. Hinder continues,

> People are a little confused in their thinking about art today...they have a conviction and don't want to change it. When we get television, artists may be able to bombard people with contemporary art as the wireless has done with contemporary music... the Cubists brought a big revolution in art at the beginning of the century; but now we are in the terrifying experimental stage when we have broken with the past. The influence of the Cubists has had a most far-reaching effect on all modern design--

furniture, architecture, and advertising. (Her belief is that) It is the work of the abstract artist today which will influence industrial, architectural, and domestic design in the future.[40]

In the late 1950s, Margel Hinder's *Thistledown* sculpture did just that as an integral component in the design of a presentation at a cocktail party.

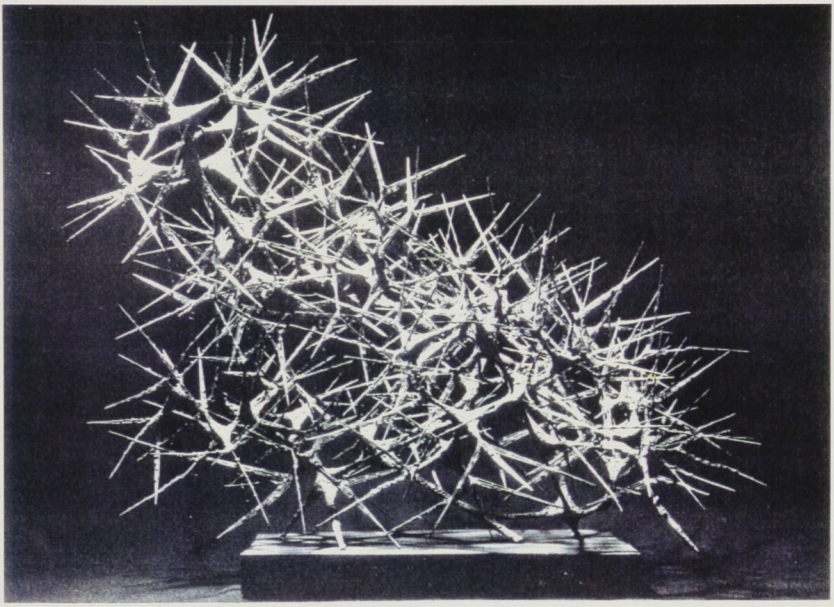


Fig.12. *Thistledown,* 1957

Ms. Hinder: Do you know Laurie Thomas? Well, he said this is the greatest...I'm not drunk... I'm not drunk... now he said this is the greatest thing that's ever been done. There...{**ah yes, it's gorgeous**} The thing is the people that bought it, Ron Stuart,...well, they bought it and their friends used to put cocktail sausages (on it). So, we bought it back and those things are bent.

D. Modjeska and H. McPhee: Where did they put the cocktail sausages?

Ms. Hinder: Well on the spikes. And when we heard that, someone told us, we bought it back.

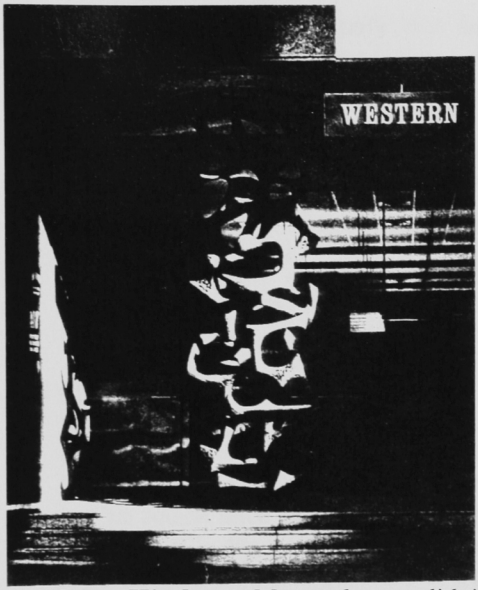
D. Modjeska and H. McPhee: Did they know why you were buying it back?

Ms. Hinder: No, and then they had a rabbit and that place was all full of rabbit fur...and a... so we bought it. Then somebody else has bought it, he hasn't got a rabbit... nor does he have cocktail parties. [41]

Although Margel Hinder's hope was that the abstract artist would influence domestic design in the future, the use of her intricate *Thistledown* as a sausage centerpiece and rabbit hutch was not exactly flattering. In many cases, once a sculpture has exchanged ownership from the artist to the buyer, the sculpture's purpose changes as well. In this case, *Thistledown* was transformed into a functional object where the owner was inspired by a current trend-- a hedgehog-type appetizer display tray.

In 1958, in her essay "A Glance at Some Modern Sculpture" in Hemisphere, Margel Hinder states that,

> It is difficult for people who live in countries with centuries of art tradition behind them to realize the conditions that confront the artist in Australia-- not only is there a lack of past art to stimulate the artist and student; but also this lack leaves the public unaware of art as a necessity as well as a vital form of expression. In a new country with its energies and financial resources directed toward pioneering, it is understandable that the difficult and expensive art of sculpture would have little place. The early artists had to overcome not only the disinterest but also technical handicaps unknown in older lands with well-established crafts and craftsmen. Despite all present difficulties, opportunities for the sculptor have never been better in Australia. For him to succeed to any marked degree there must be some understanding between the artists, the architects and the public, but the height to which sculpture will develop depends finally on the quality and creative capacity of the sculptor himself.[42]



In 1985, Margel and Frank Hinder were interviewed (for 990 minutes) by Barbara Blackman. Here Margel Hinder is explaining a complete lack of understanding of her Western Assurance Company commissioned sculpture:

Fig.13.

Ms. Hinder: My sculpture didn't turn out as I had hoped. Then the building many years later changed hands and one day somebody rang up and said, 'Did you know that your sculpture has been cut down in Pitt Street and is being sent off to the scrap yard today?' I said, "No, although somebody had told me that they had seen a paper tied around it that said 'for sale' on it that I thought was a joke."

Ms. Blackman: People wouldn't take a painting out of a foyer and cut it up, I suppose they would a mural.

Ms. Hinder: And of course, you can't take a tree either. Anyway, I rang up Peter...

Ms. Blackman: It was up for about 20 years?

Ms. Hinder: Oh easily, yes, so anyway they cut it up 14 pieces. so we all got down...and Peter Johnson...got down...to the site... first and he was in the middle of a fight with the son of the owner...an argument. Gill came... and we arrived a bit excited and then this young man said 'You can't have it, if you take it, you've got to buy it!' He was being very aggressive and very unpleasant and at one stage Peter turned to him and said, 'I'd like to punch you in the face.'

Frank Hinder: Not only that he put his hand on his shoulder which is a stupid thing to do because that's assault.

Ms. Hinder: But then the father arrived...he could see that something funny was happening. We told him the story.

Frank Hinder: And we threatened him with a law suit... infringement on the copyright. He didn't have a leg to stand on.

Ms. Hinder: He didn't know that. And he said well he wanted to put a doorway there and it was in the way, he didn't like it. And his son said, 'We hate it, we all hate it! And so we cut it up'. And Gill said 'Why didn't you get in touch with the Art Gallery?' And he said 'Never heard of it.' He said, 'If I'd a broken window, I would have known what to do with it but a thing like this?!' Oh he did ring up Barry Stern and he thought someone was having a joke with him (For sale, sculpture, 14 ft, copper...He put a notice in the paper too.) Oh yes, that's true he did and nobody answered it of course. He put it in with antiques or something so...anyway... He said if you take it away at once and don't say anything to the press... Oh he said $1000.00. and Peter Johnson said 'After what you've done the least you can do is give it to us.' And so he said 'Alright, take it away, I give it to you.' So Gill came and picked it up and brought it to the Art Gallery...then it was dumped in our backyard where it stayed for a year.[44]

This is a situation where initially the sculpture was developed with the cooperation of the artist, architect and public but many years later the building becomes the property of one who is "...unaware of art as a necessity, as well as a vital form of expression".[44] This incident is common. Here, the new owner acquires the sculpture by purchasing a building and decides the piece of art would be more useful as scrap metal. Luckily, Margel Hinder was there to salvage her sculpture...which she later reconstructed. The risk of passing ownership is always there. All the reconstruction work, they did for free. Ms. Hinder had to "...resheet, recover and try to get a patina that had taken over twenty years to build up naturally."[45] But she did it and, in the end, she and Frank agreed it had never looked better.

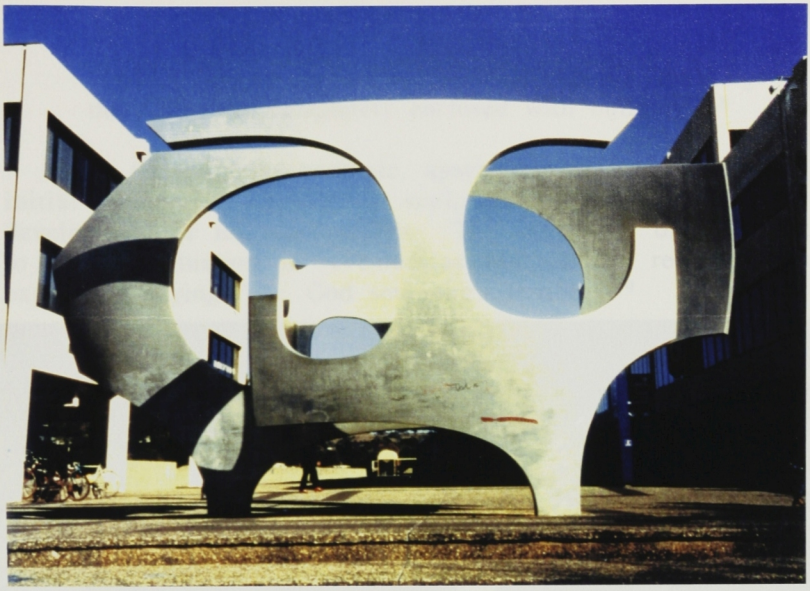


Fig.14. *Sculpture for Woden Town Square*, 1972. Photo 1994.

In 1969, Ms. Hinder received the National Capital Development Commission sculpture work at Woden. Although her maquette didn't win the Comalco Invitation Award competition, Ron Robertson-Swann's did, she won the commission to erect her sculpture at the site. When a boatbuilder, Michael Snook, finished fabricating the sculpture, Ms. Hinder was horrified. One whole section looked as if it was falling off. The boatbuilder said, "When I build a boat and make a mistake, I rectify it in the next boat."[46] Ms. Hinder replied, "There isn't going to be another boat, this is it. Something's got to be done."[47] The problem was rectified. Later, the sculpture, considered by Ms. Hinder as probably her best, has been the victim of vandalism--a surface for another artist's graffiti.

> **Ms. Blackman**: What's happened to it now? You say it has been vandalized?
>
> **Ms. Hinder**: My daughter said, 'Don't go and look at it, it will break your heart.' It's been ground polished... There's a fashion nowadays it was started by David Smith in America of sort of making circular marks to give a certain vitality which I dislike because it becomes a cliche. So he took a certain grit and ground it all the

way across with a slight flicker. But my daughter said... it's got graffiti, posters... Even this long walkway, I don't know if they've closed that off now and put buildings there so it is completely enclosed with buildings.[48]

In the previous example, apart from the vandalism, the initial design of a public sculpture is changed by the development of its surroundings. The sensitivity of the artist to such a situation is revealed as Ms. Hinder recalled this experience saying "Oh, God sculpture's terrible!"[49]

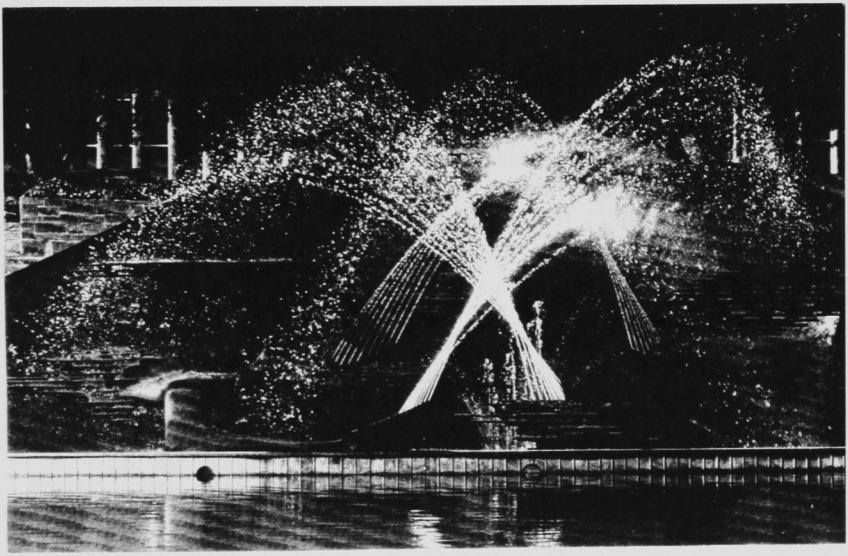


Fig. 15. *Captain James Cook Memorial Fountain,* 1961/66.

The final example of negative reception involves Margel Hinder's Newcastle commission of the *Captain James Cook Memorial Fountain* which experienced vandalism and infringement of the copyright. Ms. Hinder mentioned that everybody would come and say it was a waste of money. Later, vandals had sawed off bits of the fountain. And there is a lack of upkeep.[50] There was a trial that ensued as well concerning copyright infringement. The Newcastle City Council installed green floodlights without approval from the Hinders. In Nation Review 1974, in the article, "Newcastle Shows its Bad Taste: Making a Fountain out of a Coal Hill", "Just what the outcome of the dispute will be is far from clear. If the council wins, which seems unlikely, it might also decide to paint a moustache on Dobell's *Strapper*, its other major possession."[51] The deputy lord mayor was noted to have said "...that he had

no intention of mucking about with artists and his suggestion that the Hinders might well be too old to make an astute judgement in the matter" was an additional insult to the Hinders.[52] In the end, the Hinders won the case. What the city council had done was against the original design of the fountain. In contrast to the abundance of negativity concerning the fountain, Ms. Hinder recalled an incident where a man flew his wife up from Sydney to see the fountain for her birthday present.[53]

Frank and Margel Hinder speak of their reception of art in the 1985 Barbara Blackman interview. Blackman asks them about conceptual art and disposable art.

> **Frank Hinder**: Yes, I mean there's so much rubbish, they can talk about it until it sounds quite important but...you say 'So what?' But then you think well maybe you're wrong.
>
> **Ms. Hinder:** Yes, you see we're saying the things now about the young people that they were saying about us and we know we were right so how do we know that the people nowadays aren't right?[54]

In the August 19, 1994 interview with Margel Hinder in Gordon, New South Wales, I asked Ms. Hinder where she felt art was going today.

> **Ms. Hinder**: I wouldn't know. I hate to think. Because, well you see, I'm old and when I was young we were enthralled with the art of our time...Cubist and things like that... you love it... But then you get older and you come to another and you think, well, I think I understand what they're after but I don't really love it. Then another and you say I don't really understand what they're after let alone love it. Frank always used to say when we were young you had something to fight for. You were really fighting for contemporary art and you were fighting for people. I was reading something the other day. Howard Ashton said Frank's work '...was like Bartok...the smell of drains.' He was so pleased to be mentioned in the same breath as Bartok.[55]

In the 1962 Age article "Margel Hinder: A Woman and an Oxy-Acetylene Torch", Ms. Hinder mentions that she is "...often asked by people, looking at one or another of her sculptures, 'But what does it represent?' She no longer broods over such questions. She knows that even if she does a classic representation of a human form somebody will see something different in it from what she sees."[56]

Conclusion

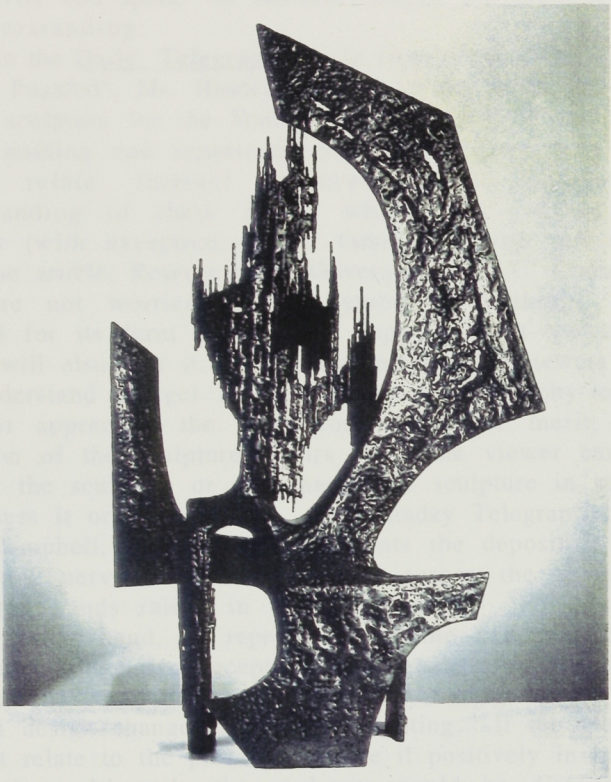


Fig.16. *Free-standing Sculpture* for Reserve Bank, 1964.

Margel Hinder looked to nature for inspiration for her abstractions. She mentions noticing grass and cobwebs with dew that is so unbelievable that she tries to capture this moment.[57] The way she captures this moment is abstract. It relates to the idea of dynamic symmetry where the modern artist designs his/her composition in a dynamic geometrical way similar to what occurs in nature--for example in leaf distribution in plants. It is understandable, therefore, that public reception to Margel Hinder's sculpture would be tumultuous. She had an intellectual and complex understanding of what sculpture is and she strenuously worked to portray an idea in sculptural form based on movement, space, and light.[58]

Not interested in literal symbolism, Ms. Hinder was more interested in creating sculptures that tried to get away

from the center of gravity.[59] To create artworks with the primary purpose of portraying the generally unnoticed...effects of gravity and space or abstract images, the artist is inviting misunderstanding.

In the Daily Telegraph article from 1964, "The Thing has Sydney Puzzled", Ms. Hinder explains to the public the purpose of her sculpture for the Federal Reserve Bank in Sydney: "It means nothing and represents nothing."[60] Then, how does the viewer relate, interact or even try to possess some understanding of these pieces which lack realism or the familiar (with exception of the familiarity with material)? In the same article, Reserve Bank Governor Dr. H.C. Coombs said: "We are not worried that it symbolises nothing. It was selected for its form and we are happy with it--we know the public will also like it."[61] For the majority of viewers who do not understand Margel Hinder's complex philosophy of art or can not appreciate the work for its artistic merit, positive reception of the sculpture occurs when the viewer can find a use for the sculpture or can change the sculpture in some way to possess it or appreciate it. For Sunday Telegraph columnist Ross Campbell, "The Thing" represents the depositor--"See the quivering, nervous figure straddled across the middle with emaciated hands raised in feeble protest?"[62] For Ms. Hinder, on the other hand, as represented in the examples described previously, negative reception occurs when a Margel Hinder sculpture is vandalised, used as a hot dog holder, or the original design changed with green lighting. If the viewer still can not relate to the piece to receive it positively in his or her mind, then ultimately the sculpture could be disregarded all together and changed into something more reasonable to the possessor at the time--scrap metal.

What is the difference between Duchamp's *Fountain*, Nolan's *Boy and the Moon* and Hinder's *Thistledown*? If one approached them democratically, each would have its own equal artistic merits. Duchamp was successful in igniting controversy by taking a common object and transforming it by simple means into a 'fountain'. *Boy and the Moon* might be appreciated for its mysterious qualities and simplicity. Margel Hinder is able to transform metal spikes into a dangerous, complex composition. It is evident that the reception of artwork is controlled by the viewer--by the luck of the draw an abstract artwork like Margel Hinder's will fall into the hands of one who is interested in knowing the artist's motivation behind its creation to understand it. But, in Ms. Hinder's experience this is rare. Regarding abstract art created

by such an intense and focused sculptor, reception is open to any interpretation positive or negative.

If the opposite path is chosen to defend negative reception, one could announce, "Let's not include Nolan's *Boy and the Moon* because we don't understand it. We don't have Nolan here to explain it and we can find no artistic merit in it. It is a toilet seat----putrid!" or "Let's not consider Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* as appropriate for an art exhibition--it is indecent!" There is no explanation. Who is this R. Mutt? How can the viewer possess the inverted urinal if Duchamp anonymously submitted the fountain? In such an instance fear of the unfamiliar sets in. Because of this misunderstanding, the piece is excluded from the exhibition. When Stieglitz photographs *Fountain* behind a painting with similar shapes, the piece becomes familiar and legitimate art.

Regarding the problem of reception, the sculptor Glynn Williams criticizes Marcel Duchamp's readymades in his article "Sculpture: an Endangered Species" in Sculpture July 1994. He calls the readymades the first sign of a virus--the *Bottlerack* virus "...which would have a crippling effect upon the future progress of modern sculpture." [63]

In order to fully appreciate a Margel Hinder sculpture, it is necessary to understand the problems she is trying to solve in sculptural form--space, light and movement. In order to understand a Marcel Duchamp it is necessary to integrate idea and form as well. Williams criticizes Duchamp by saying the readymade displays "...no effort, ability, or skill.. apart from the initial choice."[64]

It may seem that Duchamp's Fountain and readymades, Nolan's *Boy and the Moon* or Margel Hinder's *Thistledown* have nothing in common. They have different visual languages. But they all work in an abstract way that demands the viewer to question their creation. Williams defends modernism saying that, "It was never in conflict with pre-existing traditions. In fact, it kept tradition alive and evolving by building on its existing language continually referencing it."[65] That was until the horrific virus arrived! The progress of this developing "...tradition of modernism was interrupted, changed and eventually halted--not by its own evolution but by that nihilistic *Bottlerack* virus."[66] Fear of the disease. William states that as a result of the Duchamp virus "...gone will be the struggle that had once called forth daring, courage, and imagination."[67]

I disagree, sculpture is not in a state of decay. Duchamp, Nolan, and Margel Hinder are daring in that they had the courage to show that a negative reception is not final.

Williams makes it seem that it is Duchamp's fault that promising young sculptors today become "...embarrassed and within a short time change their work to conform to the fashion of the moment."[68] That is the young sculptor's choice to cut off the flowing supply of creativity. Those sculptors are afraid of the unfamiliar. What Duchamp did has become common. Margel Hinder sums up the risk-taking innovator by saying, "An artist would never produce anything of value if he were always looking over his shoulder for public approval."[69]

Notes

1 Richard Haese, Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years of Australian Art, Allen lane, 1981, p.5.
2 Ibid., p.4.
3 Jay Hambidge, Dynamic Symmetry: The Greek Vase, New Haven, 1920, pp.7-8.
4 Barbara Rose, American Art Since 1900, New York, 1975, p.9.
5 Ibid., p.11.
6 Ken Scarlett, Australian Sculptors, Thomas Nelson Australia Pty. Ltd., Melbourne, 1980, p.252.
7 Rose, p.24.
8 Ibid., p.28.
9 Margel Hinder, [Interview with Margel Hinder], [soundrecording], Gordon, N.S.W., August 19, 1994, with Monica Mitchell, Tape 1 of 1 side 1.
10 Rose, p.30-31.
11 Ibid., p.31.
12 Ibid., p.32.
13 Ibid., p. 49.
14 Ibid., p. 52.
15 Ibid., p.64.
16 Ibid., p.92.
17 Ibid., p.92.
18 Margel Hinder, [Interview with Margel Hinder, Sculptor], [soundrecording], August 13-19, 1993, with Hilary McPhee and Drusilla Modjeska, Tape 2 of 3, side B.
19 Hinder, [soundrecording] with Monica Mitchell, Tape 1 of 1 , side 1.
20 Renee Free, Balson, Crowley, Fizelle, Hinder, Art Gallery of N.S.W., 5-30 October 1966, p.9.
21 Haese, p.9.
22 Ibid., p.2.
23 Ibid., p.4.
24 Margel Hinder, [Interview with Frank and Margel Hinder], [soundrecording], Paddington, N.S.W., 1984-85, with Barbara Blackman, Tape 4, side 2.
25 Graeme Sturgeon, The Development of Australian Sculpture: 1788-1975. Thames and Hudson Ltd., London, 1978, p.118.
26 Hinder, [soundrecording] with Hilary McPhee and Drusilla Modjeska, Tape 2 of 3, side A.
27 Ibid., Tape 2 of 3 Side A.
28 Ibid., Tape 2 of 3 Side A.
29 Ibid., Tape 2 of 3 Side A.
30 Hambidge, foreward.
31 Ibid., foreward.
32 Ibid., p.7.
33 Ibid., p.45.
34 Ibid., p.142.
35 Haese, pp.69-70.
36 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
37 Sturgeon, pp. 117-118.
38 Terry Ingram, A Matter of Taste: Investing in Australian Art, William Collins Publishers Pty. Ltd., Sydney, 1976, p.95.
39 M. Machin, "She Speaks in Sculpture", Woman's Day, Sydney, 28 November 1949, p.18.
40 Ibid., p.19.
41 Hinder, [soundrecording], with H. McPhee and D. Modjeska, Tape 2 of 3 Side B.

42 Margel Hinder, "A Glance at Some Modern Sculptors", Hemisphere, Sydney, Vol. 2, No. 2, February 1958, p.22.
43 Hinder, [soundrecording], with Barbara Blackman, Tape 7 Side 1.
44 Hinder, Hemisphere, p.22.
45 Hinder, [soundrecording], with B. Blackman, Tape 7 Side 1.
46 Ibid., Tape 7 Side 2.
47 Ibid., Tape 7 Side 2.
48 Ibid., Tape 7 Side 2.
49 Ibid., Tape 7 Side 2.
50 Ibid., Tape 7 Side 2.
51 "Newcastle Shows its Bad Taste: Making a Fountain Out of a Coal Hill", Nation Review, December 12, 1973-January 3, 1974, p.359.
52 Ibid. p.359.
53 Hinder, [soundrecording] with Barbara Blackman, Tape 7 side 2.
54 Ibid., Tape 8 Side 2.
55 Hinder, [soundrecording] with Monica Mitchell, Tape 1 Sides 1 and 2.
56 John Hetherington, "Australian Artists in Profile: Margel Hinder: A Woman and an Oxy-Acetylene Torch", Age, Melbourne, 25 August 1962, p.18.
57 Hinder, [soundrecording] with Barbara Blackman, Tape 7 Side 2.
58 Margel Hinder, [Conversation with Margel Hinder], [soundrecording], 1963 July 20 with Hazel de Berg, transcripts from Tape 45 Cut 1 Side 2.
59 Hinder, [soundrecording] with Monica Mitchell, Tape 1 Side 1.
60 "The Thing has Sydney Puzzled", Daily Telegraph, Sydney, April 29, 1962.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
63 Glynn Williams, "Sculpture: An Endangered Species", Sculpture, July-August 1994, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 34.
64 Ibid., p. 34.
65 Ibid., p.36.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., p. 38.
69 Hetherington, p. 18.

Bibliography

Bloomfield Galleries. Invitation for Frank and Margel Hinder Exhibition, Aug.- Sept. 1994, Paddington, N.S.W.

Thierry de Duve. The Definitively Unfinished Marcel Duchamp. M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, 1991.

Free, Renee. Balson, Crowley, Fizelle, Hinder. Art Gallery of N.S.W., 5-30 October 1966.

Free, Renee. Frank and Margel Hinder 1930-1980. Trustees of the Art Gallery of N.S.W., Sydney, 1980.

Haese, Richard. Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years of Australian Art. Allen lane, 1981.

Hambidge, Jay. Dynamic Symmetry: The Greek Vase. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1920.

Heath, T. "The Recent Sculpture of Margel Hinder". Architecture in Australia, Sydney, Vol. 49, No. 4, December 1960, p.95.

Hetherington, John. "Australian Artists in Profile--Margel Hinder: A Woman and an Oxy-Acetylene Torch". Age, Melbourne, 25 August 1962.

Hinder, Frank. Frank Hinder: Lithographs. Langridge Press. Sydney. 1978.

Hinder, Margel. [Conversation with Margel Hinder], [soundrecording]. 1963 July 20 with Hazel de Berg.

Hinder, Frank and Margel. [Interview with Frank and Margel Hinder], [soundrecording], Paddington, N.S.W. 1984-1985, with Barbara Blackman.

Hinder, Margel. [Interview with Margel Hinder, Sculptor], [soundrecording]. Gordon, NS.W. August 13-19, 1993, with Hilary McPhee and Drusilla Modjeska.

Hinder, Margel. [Interview with Margel Hinder], [soundrecording]. Gordon, N.S.W., August 19, 1994, with Monica Mitchell.

Hinder, Margel. "A Glance at Some Modern Sculptors". Hemisphere, Sydney, Vol.2, No. 2, February 1958, pp.22-25.

Homer, William Innes. Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-garde. Secker and Warburg. London. 1977.

Ingram, Terry. A Matter of Taste: Investing In Australian Art. William Collins Publishers Pty. Ltd., Sydney, 1976.

Machin, M. "She Speaks in Sculpture". Woman's Day, Sydney, 28 November 1949, pp. 18-19.

"Newcastle Shows its Bad Taste: Making a Fountain Out of a Coal Hill". Nation Review. December 12, 1973- January 3, 1974, p.359.

Rose, Barbara. American Art Since 1900. Praeger Publishers, New York, 1976.

Scarlett, Ken. Australian Sculptors. Thomas Nelson Australia Pty. Ltd., Melbourne 1980.

Sturgeon, Graeme. The Development of Australian Sculpture: 1788-1975. Thames and Hudson Ltd., London, 1978.

"The Thing has Sydney Puzzled". Daily Telegraph. Sydney, April 29, 1964.

Williams, Glynn. "Sculpture: An Endangered Species". Sculpture. July--August 1994, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp.33-39.

Research Paper Study Proposal (20%)

General Aims: In consultation with Gordon Bull of the Art Theory Department, I am interested in the idea of women traveling artists. I am specifically focusing on the sculptor Margel Hinder. Born in New York in 1906, she began classes in sculpture at the age of five in Buffalo. From 1926-1929, Margel Hinder studied traditional modeling in clay and plaster at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston under Charles Grafley and Frederick Allan. In 1930, she married the Australian painter Frank Hinder. In 1934, she and her husband arrived in Australia never to return to the United States. In 1939, she became an Australian citizen. On the ship to Australia, Margel Hinder completed her first wood carving. She continued to carve mainly in wood until the 1950s, when in 1953, she began working in metal.

I have always been fascinated with art from the early and mid-1900s primarily with Cubism and art reflecting the mood during and after World War I and World War II. In 1991, I went to Montreal, Canada, where I saw an incredible exhibition called **The Age of the Metropolis**. The cubist art and that reflecting experiences of World War I left an impression on me. Margel Hinder was developing as an artist during this period. I am interested in learning about Margel Hinder not only because she is a woman sculptor who traveled to Australia and that I am a woman sculptor as well working in clay in Australia but that she is a product of that tumultuous period in the Twentieth Century--a time when the status of women was rapidly changing and she was developing as an artist during a time that was rapidly being changed by war.

My goal is to interview Margel Hinder. I want to ask her what it was like to be a woman artist in the United States until she left for Australia in 1934. I am particularly interested in her feelings about moving to Australia and how this new environment changed her art--what influence this had on her artistic development and her philosophies of art. What were her greatest influences and what were some of the reasons for changing different media in sculpture? What was it like to be married to the well-known Australian artist Frank Hinder and still try to establish her identity in Australia as a serious sculptor? In relation to my studio practice, I feel a link with Ms. Hinder. I hope to gain new insights from her philosophies of art and experiences of being a woman sculptor born in the United States and traveling to Australia in the early stages of her artistic career. As I am influenced by my new surroundings in 1994, so too was Margel Hinder sixty years earlier.